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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Seventieth year

Identical letters dated 9 October 2015 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

The situation in occupied Palestine, including East Jerusalem, continues to deteriorate at an alarming rate owing to the escalation of Israel's latest campaign of military aggression against the Palestinian people. In recent days, the occupying Power has intensified its onslaught against Palestinian civilians, including in the occupied Gaza Strip, in grave breach of international law, including international humanitarian law and the relevant provisions regarding the protection of civilians in armed conflict, and in grave breach of the prohibition of collective punishment against the civilian population under occupation.

Casualties and injuries among the Palestinian civilian population, including women and children, are, tragically, mounting. Today, seven more Palestinians were killed at the hands of the occupying forces. Six of those killed were from the occupied Gaza Strip, where more than 1.8 million Palestinians continue to live under an illegal and immoral Israeli blockade. In Gaza Israeli occupying forces fired at peaceful demonstrators in an area east of the al-Shujaiyeh neighbourhood, killing Ahmed al-Hirbawi, Shadi Dawla, Ziyad Nabeel Sharaf and Abed al-Wahidi, all 20 years of age, while Mohammad al-Raqeb, 15 years of age, was killed after being shot by occupying forces near Khan Younis. Another Palestinian youth, Adnan Abu Alayyan, 19 years of age, was also killed east of Khan Younis. More than 150 Palestinian civilians, among them many children, were injured as a result of the excessive and disproportionate force used by the occupying Power.

The seventh Palestinian causality, Mohammad al-Ja'bari, 19 years of age, was killed in the occupied West Bank city of al-Khalil, near the illegal settlement of Kiryat Arba. In addition to this killing, across the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the Red Crescent is reporting that more than 45 Palestinians have been injured today by live ammunition by the occupying forces and hundreds more have suffered from tear gas inhalation. This brings the total number of Palestinians injured, many of

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them severely, since the beginning of Israel's latest onslaught to more than 800 civilians.

I must convey the Palestinian leadership's grave concern and total condemnation of the continuation of this blatant Israeli aggression and incitement to violence and terror against the Palestinian people. Such reckless behaviour, deliberately aimed at terrorizing and causing harm to our people, captive under this illegal foreign occupation, is seriously heightening tensions and risks the further unraveling of the already fragile situation. In this regard, I bring to your attention the incitement and provocation by Israel's so-called mayor of Jerusalem, who called upon all Jews to carry their guns "all the time" to respond to so-called "Palestinian attacks". Video footage shows him walking around the occupied city carrying a rifle. Such examples of provocation by Israeli officials, together with the continued ban on Palestinian worshippers from the al-Aqsa mosque compound, especially during Friday prayers, can only further inflame tensions, fuelling more unrest and violence, with dire consequences.

The latest onslaught by Israeli occupying forces, upon official government directives, against the Palestinian people has only further emboldened illegal Israeli settlers, who have also intensified their attacks and crimes against Palestinian civilians and their property with complete and utter impunity. Protected by Israeli occupying forces, video footage shows Israeli settlers attacking Palestinians, while occupying forces not only provide cover for them but also attack Palestinians side by side with the groups of armed settlers. Among the many criminal acts committed by illegal Israeli settlers is the incident in which an Israeli settler vehicle ran over Bilal al-Ja'bari, 11 years of age, in the Jaber neighbourhood of al-Khalil, on 7 October 2015. As a result of this vicious crime against yet another innocent child, Bilal is seriously injured and continues to be hospitalized.

After nearly five decades of Israeli repression, violence and collective punishment, which has resulted in thousands of Palestinian deaths and injuries and trauma to the entire civilian population, the international community should not allow one more day to go by where the Palestinian people are left without international protection. Words are not enough and action must be taken to compel Israel, the occupying Power, to halt its illegal and destructive policies and practices. This is urgent to ensure immediate protection for the defenceless Palestinian civilian population, consistent with the provisions and obligations of international humanitarian law. The Palestinian people cannot remain the exception to the responsibility to protect civilians from such atrocities and flagrant breaches of the law. This is also urgent to prevent the situation from spiralling further out of control, particularly in occupied East Jerusalem, where reckless Israeli provocations regarding al-Haram al-Sharif have seriously aggravated religious sentiments and threaten to instigate a religious conflict.

We call again upon the Security Council to take real action to defuse the situation on the ground and call upon Israel, the occupying Power, to withdraw its forces from the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and immediately cease its aggressions against the Palestinian civilian population. The international community cannot remain paralyzed while this critical situation continues to escalate and threatens to plunge the region into another cycle of violence that will only bring more bloodshed and suffering and loss of all hope for a better future.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 556 previous letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. Those letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 7 October 2015 (A/ES-10/693-S/2015/769), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine
to the United Nations